

MORRIS DAM CONTAMINATION

Since 1939, the waters behind Morris Dam have been used to test Navy torpedoes. For nearly 50 years, under a lease agreement with the Metropolitan Water District (MWD), the Navy operated a research and development facility on a 20-acre peninsula located in the middle of the reservoir. Now the Navy is dealing with the environmental costs of this program. After the area is cleaned up by the Navy, it will be transferred back to the MWD, and there is a possibility that the MWD would then transfer ownership to the County Department of Public Works to support our County operations at both the Morris and San Gabriel reservoirs.

Operations at the facility ceased in 1993, and since then, Navy and State regulatory officials have been trying to determine the extent of chemical contamination in the soil and reservoir. Arsenic and perchlorate in soil and reservoir water and sediments are two principal contaminants of concern.

The Navy is proposing a \$6.5 million plan to remove more than 17,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil. But the plan reportedly leaves at least 15 to 20 percent of some contamination behind. Because past operations at this facility may have resulted in substantial contamination of the environment, including the water and sediments in the reservoir, it is essential that the contamination be fully evaluated, and that appropriate cleanup action be completed to ensure public health is protected.

- MORE -

MOTION

Molina	_____
Ridley-Thomas	_____
Yaroslavsky	_____
Antonovich	_____
Knabe	_____

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Director of Public Health and the County Forester and Fire Warden to:

1. meet with the Cal/EPA Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and the Department of the Navy to review progress in assessing the extent of contamination at this site, and developing a complete clean-up plan that will ensure the protection of public health and the environment; and
2. report back to the Board in 30 days on the status of the investigation with the Navy and California Department of Toxic Substances Control.

#

MDA:flh
s:\motions\Morris Dam Contamination